

Mussar HaMadda

A Chofetz Chaim of Cherry Hill Publication

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The 3 Little Pigs

“AND THE WOLF SLID DOWN THE CHIMNEY, WHERE HE LANDED IN A POT OF BOILING WATER (פ'ג'ג 3:16)

THE wolf was a cunning predator. He successfully managed to expel 2 of the 3 little pigs from their homes. (The first two pigs, coincidentally, shared contractors with the Yeshiva.) The 2 pigs ran to the home of the third pig, who had made himself a house of solid brick. The wolf couldn't huff, puff, snort, or blow the house down, proving that the bricks were indeed cost-effective, not just another pork-barrel expenditure. Annoyed at his inability to get his lunch, he quickly contrived a plan to slide down the chimney. Unfortunately, like most hastily conceived plans, his quickly landed him in hot water. The last thing that went through his mind was a fork.

Lottery- a tax on the stupid.

It's tough to be in the סוגיא when you're in the פרשה.

Purim brings out the best in people- their lunch, their supper...

א רוב of פשטות is שטות.

The behavior of the שווארצא וואלף is extremely disconcerting. Any self-respecting mammal is able to realize that underneath a chimney is usually a stovetop containing pots, or a fireplace. Furthermore, since the chimney was the only open entrance route into the otherwise protected home, it more than made sense that the cunning runt who built the house would have a pot of boiling water ready at the bottom end. The wolf should have realized this, and given up on conquering these swine. After all, there are more than enough cans of Spam on the shelf in every supermarket. Sure, he would have lost the thrill of the hunt and the joy of victory. Sure, it meant that he would have to take out his anger elsewhere. However, it would have saved a member of an endangered species, preserving the biodiversity of the ecosystem for yet one more day. While it's easy to say that his anger caused him to improperly evaluate the situation, a *shmuess* in and of itself, what was the cause of his anger?

The wolf was indeed an intelligent animal. He realized that, up to this point, he had botched his quest to get himself a fresh supper. He had two options available to him. He could have turned around, acknowledged his lack of success, and moved on to something more productive. However, doing that would have meant admitting he had flopped. Emotionally, that was too much to bear- it would have hurt his mental self-image as an alpha wolf. Angered at the threat to his status, he pig-headedly looked for some venue of rescuing his psyche, and plunged full-boar down the chimney. Sometimes going whole hog into a venture just isn't worth it.

One must be careful to control his, her, or its emotions. One should not let his/her/its decisions be tainted by petty things such as fear of failure. Fear leads to hate, hate leads to anger, and anger leads to the *sitra achra*, which can totally consume you as it did the wolf. In addition, even predators have their place in this world. We must all look out for preserving the planet's biodiversity, stopping ecoterrorism wherever possible, and supporting wildlife conservation projects.